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in minds of inferior calibre—poor pasture, as it were—finally have been eaten by and assimilated into the brain of Napoleon Bonaparte, and meeting there with conditions and surroundings like to those of their ancient Roman home, planted in good and well-manured brain soil, they may have grown vigorously, labored with some of their ancient energy, and enabled Napoleon, through their agency, to make France mistress of Europe?”

DR. FRIEDRICH HARMS ON THE FORMS OF ETHICAL SYSTEMS.¹

In a separate reprint from the proceedings of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Berlin for 1878 we find a lecture of Professor Harms, of Berlin, read by him before the Academy, in May and July, 1878. The following extracts translated from the lecture will prove of interest, and suggest a field of profitable thinking in the department of ethical studies, now attracting so much attention on the part of thinkers. The entire treatise ought to be translated and published in English.

“In the history of philosophy we find five forms of ethics come down to us: The Greek, the East Indian, the ethics of the Middle Ages, the ethics of naturalism in modern philosophy before Kant, and the ethics of the historical point of view which we find in post-Kantian philosophy. These five forms characterize the epochs in the history of ethics—each one of these epochs having its own peculiar theory of social or moral (*sittlich*) life.”

“In Greek ethics we find subordinate tendencies; on the one hand the ethics of the Stoics and Epicureans, which asks whether the object of life is for happiness or for activity, supposing that the one or the other—happiness (Epicureans) or activity (Stoics)—will suffice for the explanation of life without the other. The Stoics and Epicureans form together one side of Greek ethics in antithesis to the system of Plato and Aristotle. . . . In this general antithesis the question is this: Whether the active or the happiness-seeking life is to find its true place in the isolated life of the individual, or in social combination. . . . Incontestably the standpoint of Plato and Aristotle is higher than that of the Stoics and Epicureans, because it takes ethics as a science of the life of man as it is found in the social community in the state and the family, and not in the personal life of the isolated individual. Even down to the present time that view of the Stoics and Epicureans has prevailed and limited ethical theories to mere collections of examples of all sorts of curious questions of dispute. . . . It is quite recently, in the post-Kantian philosophy, that this individual-

¹ Die Formen der Ethik. Von Friedrich Harms. (Aus den Abhandlungen der königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1878.) Berlin: G. Vogt. 1878.

istic form of ethics has been given up, and, through the labors of Fichte, a return has been made to the form of treatment which was set up by Plato and Aristotle. . . . Schleiermacher's Ethics, Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit, and Herbart's Practical Philosophy—all three works agree in treating together all phases of spiritual and ethical life as constituting one whole.

"The East Indian ethical system has a different basis from the Greek. The Greek ethics took shape in a polemic against the sophists regarding the foundation of science. The East Indian ethics, on the other hand, sets out from the principle that all life is an evil, full of pain and sorrow. It seeks in science the means through which the soul can free itself from the might of pain which oppresses its life. This relief from pain can be found only in science and self-knowledge. This self-knowledge consists in the knowledge that the soul does nothing for itself, produces nothing, but merely contemplates; that all that is, is produced by matter, corporeal nature.

"All that happens in the world is produced by nature; the soul is only the spectator of the event. . . . When the soul comes to recognize all events as produced by nature, and to be alien to itself, it becomes indifferent to all, and contemplates all in quiet. . . . It recognizes itself as free from external events and as self-subsisting. This oblivion to the external is attained only for brief intervals in life, but perfectly in death. All pain and suffering in life arises through the union of the soul with nature. The soul gets emancipation through the knowledge that all phenomena are only a spectacle for the soul in order that it may learn science and self-knowledge. It does nothing; the world is only an illusion which does not touch the soul. . . . This view of the East Indians is in direct opposition to that of the Greek. The relation of matter to spirit is completely changed. To the Greek, matter is the passive principle, and spirit the active principle. According to the Indian ethics, matter is the active, and spirit only passive contemplation. The mind only contemplates and is *lamé*, while matter is only blind. From this arises a difference in the value which they set upon life as a means of attaining the object of the soul. The pessimistic Indian finds life utterly worthless as a means for attaining his ends, for it is only through the negation of life and its torments—pain, suffering, and sorrow—that the soul reaches its rest. For the Greek, life has a positive value, and Greek ethics do not seek the removal of life but only its regulation. Ethical life to the Greek means life in conformity to the principle of moderation. . . . The Greek believes life to be not merely for contemplation, but for action also."

"As a third to these two forms may be added the ethics of the Middle

Ages—including under this head the scholastic and patristic writers. (The patristic are, of course, not included in the Middle Ages if the classification is strict.) In this system of ethics we find a new idea added to that of the Greeks and Hindoos—an idea of the history of the human race. For the Christian fathers hold that there is a plan in the history of the race—it is the education of the race through divine revelation; this is an ethical process. In India this thought cannot appear; for life is an evil, and a greater evil the longer it endures; the Indian idea is well expressed in the utterance of Schopenhauer: ‘History is an eternal monotony—it is only the long and confused dream of humanity.’ But, according to the Christian fathers, life in its totality is a valuable means for the realization of its purpose in the history of the human race. Even the Greeks did not conceive this universal destiny of the human race, although they conceived (in the system of Plato and Aristotle) a personal life and a life in the community. This idea takes two forms in the Middle Ages: the ethics of the Church and the ethics of the secular life in the state. The Church takes the form of an universal, all-inclusive community, while the state assumes the form of a limited and narrow community by the side of the Church. The state cannot give peace to the soul; it can give only justice in a province of external action. A separation arises between Church and state, between political and religious life, such as never appeared in the ancient world. . . . The concept of sin stands in contrast with the Indian idea of life as the source of all evil and pain. It is not physical, nor metaphysical, but something moral—something that springs from a deed. Sin presupposes a normal form which may be realized, and from which there is a departure by the one who sins. (In the Indian ethics there is no such ideal presupposed, but all form is abnormal.) The antithesis of Church and state, and the antithesis of sin and holiness, both enter as determining elements into the ethics of the Middle Ages. . . . Hence, too, the ethics of the Christian fathers makes the will the principle of the world and of spiritual life. . . . The problem of the freedom of the will becomes the chief object of investigation. In the will lies the explanation of the ethical world. . . . In the will, Saint Augustine finds the true being and essence of man and the cause of all his works. Thomas Aquinas defines that as good which all will. An absolute will is, according to Duns Scotus, the ground of the creation of the world. Hence, too, the will of God is the norm of all ethical life, the latter being judged by its conformity to the will of God. . . . God’s will is conceived as without change or variableness, as an eternal law, as impressed upon all being—the world being regarded as a divine work and as a revelation of God’s will, and hence throughout as an

ethical process. Augustine presents these contrasts of secular life and religious life, of sin and holiness, of grace and depravity, in such a manner as to bring out strongly their incompatibility. The secular and theological virtues are contrasted: the secular are the four cardinal virtues of the Greeks; the theological virtues are faith, hope, and love. The heathen virtues are the negative of the celestial. . . . The secular state arose from the fall; Cain murdered his brother Abel, and so, too, Romulus murdered his brother Remus; but the city of God is in contrast with this. . . . Albertus Magnus reaches the highest form of ethics in the Middle Ages; with him the secular life is esteemed far more highly than with Saint Augustine. . . . Every individual being something special and limited, the division of labor arises in the secular world. The spiritual life compensates with its wholeness for the division and partiality of the secular vocations. Faith, hope, and charity do not come from the natural exercise of the soul, but from divine grace. Each one shall be and have all that the other is and has (in the secular, each takes only his share, but in the spiritual each has the whole, undivided), for what the one knows all may know, and herein the limitation of individuality which prevails in secular life is abrogated. The secular life becomes a means for the spiritual life, and the performance of the cardinal virtues a preparation for the celestial virtues."

"A fourth form of ethics is found in the modern philosophy before Kant. It offers us the naturalistic point of view in opposition to the supernaturalistic view of the Middle Ages, which made the will of God the principle of the world and the norm of life. 'The nature of things' is assumed as the ground for all events and as the norm of life. To this belongs 'natural theology,' which proposes to explain the religions of the world by natural religion. 'Natural rights' are in like manner to explain the laws of the state. . . . According to Hobbes, the law of nature is self-preservation; and this is the condition of all well-being. All natural impulses are egoistic, and seek the pleasure of the individual. According to Spinoza, nature is the power of the absolute, and each individual that strives to preserve itself is only a part and mode of the absolute, which is the power and working force in all individuals. This leads to quietism. Shaftesbury holds nature to be natural impulse that produces all—is social, benevolent, useful, and directed to the general happiness.

"In the ethics of the historical point of view, ethics and the philosophy of history are united; Lessing and Herder on the one hand, and Kant on the other, contributed to it. Fichte combined the two modes of view. Schelling and Hegel sought the same end in their philosophy of spirit; Schleiermacher and Herbart also. Freedom, says Fichte, is the

highest good, and the temporal life has worth only as it is free. The sole aim of life is to achieve freedom, and temporal life is a struggle for freedom. Only through freedom is man a member of the true world and born into true being. The will is the absolute origin of being, and there is nothing higher than the will. It might appear as if Schelling had departed from this standpoint, and had made a principle of material nature the ground of all existence. This is not the case; for, though the principle of freedom seemed to be subordinated in his system for a long period, yet it came forth at last as the true and higher principle—philosophy, according to Schelling, having to do with the problem of freedom as a reconciliation of necessity and freedom. He endeavors to show how freedom can be joined with the necessity which it encounters in nature; while Kant and Fichte attempt to treat freedom apart by itself as negative to the world. The world could not be God's creation or revelation if there were no freedom in it. In freedom alone is to be found independence and responsibility; all being is in its last and highest instance a will. . . . It is the same with Hegel. According to him, freedom is the essence of mind; and the vocation of spirit is to give objective realization to its freedom in the sphere of civil laws, morality, the family, civil society, and the state, and still further to reach a consciousness of this freedom in art, religion, and science. It is a great merit of Hegel that he has shown how freedom and law do not exclude each other, but mutually imply each other. He says that laws are the forms in which external objective freedom expresses itself. Schleiermacher has called attention to the fact that freedom is not only the self-legislation of the will, but at the same time individual fulfilment of law. There must be individual recognition of its self-determination on the part of the special person, or else the freedom is not complete. . . . According to Herbart's practical philosophy, the internal freedom is not only the first but the highest ethical idea in spiritualized society. It includes within it the actualization of the other ethical ideas which Herbart places beside it, and is, therefore, the principle of the whole, and gives the normal standard and the guide for all the others.

"The five forms of ethics correspond to their epochs of historical development: The Indian ethics as well as the ethics of naturalism are the widest departures from the true idea of ethics, inasmuch as they lack practical deeds, and recognize only subjective aims of the will. Both are anti-historic—both deny historic evolution of ethical life. The Greek and the mediæval ethics have decisive advantages in their setting a high value upon the uses of life and in the place which they give to consciousness in human life. The Greek ethical system seeks to regulate life ac-

cording to rational insight. The mediæval ethics adds to the idea of ethics that of human history as a constituent, but it remains in a discord within itself (not reconciling the secular and the religious). Ethics, since Kant, has become universal in its scope, like that of Plato and Aristotle, since it has the social life for its content; but, in addition to this, it has also an ethical historical element, for in history freedom attains objectivity in the realization of its ends. It is not involved in a mere process of becoming without attainment of being, but it has found the way that leads to the goal."

THE EDITOR.

SOCIAL SCIENCE.—INFANT EDUCATION.

[In our January number we printed the circular of Mrs. Talbot, Secretary of the Educational Committee of the American Social Science Association. The following letter has been received from Mr. Darwin on the subject of interest.—EDITOR.]

BECKENHAM, KENT, RAILWAY STATION, ORPINGTON, }
S.—E. R., July 19, 1881.

DEAR MADAM: In response to your wish, I have much pleasure in expressing the interest which I feel in your proposed investigation on the mental and bodily development of infants. Very little is at present accurately known on this subject, and I believe that isolated observations will add but little to our knowledge; whereas, tabulated results from a very large number of observations systematically made would probably throw much light on the sequence and period of development of the several faculties.

This knowledge would probably give a foundation for some improvement in our education of young children, and would show us whether the same system ought to be followed in all cases.

I will venture to specify a few points of inquiry which, as it seems to me, possess some scientific interest. For instance, does the education of the parents influence the mental powers of their children at any age, either at a very early or somewhat more advanced stage? This could, perhaps, be learned by schoolmasters or mistresses, if a large number of children were first classed according to age and their mental attainments, and afterward in accordance with the education of their parents, as far as this could be discovered.

As observation is one of the earliest faculties developed in young children, and as this power would probably be exercised in an equal degree by the children of educated and uneducated persons, it seems not impossible that any transmitted effect from education could be displayed only at a somewhat advanced age. It would be desirable to test statistically in a similar manner the truth of the often-repeated statement that colored children at first learn as quickly as white children, but that they afterward fall off in progress.

If it could be proved that education acted not only on the individual, but by transmission on the race—this would be a great encouragement to all working on this all-important subject. It is well known that children sometimes exhibit at a very early age strong special tastes, for which no cause can be assigned, although occasionally